9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

CHAP. XVI.

Means of Livelihood.

Nature has taught them gluttony, their slothful indigence teaches them temperance. They have no variety of food; from marshes and mounds they root up sword-lilies; with the leaves of this plant they roof their huts, the bulbs they use for bread. These are dug up by the women, for it is the women who provide food for the men; the men look after the huts and the herds, or else are occupied in war. The only interruption to this diet is in the event of a marriage or a birth, when they slaughter an ox, or at least a sheep, to provide a feast for their friends, unless some wild animal should happen to be taken. They also eat the leaves of many kinds of sedum.[37]) They drink the milk of cows and sheep. The women do the milking at fixed times of dawn and dusk, and they make it into butter by an elegant process. They skin a bird, and turn the skin inside out so that the feathers are inside; they tie this to a hollow stick and shake it so that the milk is separated into butter and whey.[38]) With the butter they smear their heads; the whey they drink. They do not know how to make cheese, nor do they like it. They drink nothing except milk and water; they eat only fish with scales, not eels, nor rays, etc., nor any sort of shellfish or oysters.[39]) But there is a sort of very sweet bream with scales in which they take great delight.

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[37]) Still commonly known in S. Africa as *Hottentotvygs* (Hottentots fig) or sour fig (= *Mesembrianthemum edule*).

[38]) A more accurate description of the butter-making process is given by Grevenbroek (see below, p. 347) and by Schreyer, who says: "Die Milch schütten sie in einen ledern inwendig rauchen Sack, in welchem unten ein *Löchlein*, welches sie zubinden, alsdenn nehmen ihr zwey den Milch-Sack, jeder bey einem Ende, schütten und werffen die Milch so lang in einander, bis Butter wird, als denn lassen sie die Butter-Milch durch das Löchlein abfliessen, thun die Butter herum, welche dann, wie leichtlich nachten, voll Haar ist, das einen davon eckelt; Ihnen aber eckelt nicht, denn sie können alles hinein essen, woran wir einen Eckel und abscheu haben" (*Reise nach dem Kaplande*, reprint 1931, 48). [They shake the milk in a skin bag with the hairy surface turned inward. At the bottom is a small hole, which they bind fast. Two of them then take the milk-sack, each at one end, and shake it about vigorously until the milk turns into butter. Then they allow the whey to flow out through the hole, and take out the butter, which, as can easily be imagined, is full of hair, so that one fights shy of it, but this they do not mind, for they eat many a thing which we avoid.] The modern Hottentots employ a somewhat similar method of making butter, which they eat either fresh or dried with various edible plants (cf. Schapera, op. cit., 237).

[39]) This certainly does not apply to the "Strandlopers", who ate all kinds of fish (see above, p. 97).